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SISTER SCHOLASTICA

BY W. H. WORKMAN.

I am to speak you tonight of Sister Scholastica Logsdon, a pioneer of Los Angeles, who, at the age of 88, died, at the Los Angeles Orphan Asylum, on September 3rd of this year. Of her long life, Sister Scholastica had spent 47 years in the city of Los Angeles.

The life of Sister Scholastica was a retired one, but her days and nights were filled with a noble devotion to the cause of humanity. Her name did not appear in public periodicals, her deeds were unrecorded, she cared not for worldly fame, but the good work she did, so quietly and unostentatiously is living today in the lives of countless women of Southern California and radiating from their lives to the lives of their children and their children's children. It is just, and it is good, that some one who knew her, speak of her now that she is gone, for the lives of noble men and women have a mighty influence on the lives of all. In our age of selfishness it is good to dwell upon the life of one who labored always for others, who, without material recompense or even a desire for such reward, gave freely and lovingly of her best effort for the cause of the orphan and the helpless, and for the education of the young.

Sister Scholastica was born in Maryland in the March of 1814. In her girlhood she was associated with the family of our late honored Pioneer, Hon. J. De Barth Shorb. In August of 1839, she became a member of the great order of Sisters of Charity, who in every part of the civilized and uncivilized world, carry on the work of devotion to the helpless, so characteristic of their society. Well did Sister Scholastica exemplify in her life the ideals of her order. She labored first in Mississippi, was called thence to important offices of trust in the Mother House of the Sisters of Charity at Emmitsburg, Maryland, and was in 1855 named leader of a band of six Sisters who were appointed to carry their gentle ministrations to far distant and newly inhabited California.

It required a brave and faithful spirit to undertake this work, and Sister Scholastica, Sister Ann and their associates were well

chosen. Every Pioneer knows how far away California seemed in those days when no railway stretched connecting bands of steel across the great American continent; when one heard strange and vague reports of the primitive life of the far West; when "Prairie Schooners" led one through the terrors of Indian attack "across the plains," or a long voyage by steamer brought one a wearisome journey via the Isthmus of Panama. I repeat, it required a staunch heart to venture into this unknown world, and, above all, it required a courage inspired by the faith of Sister Scholastica, for women to undertake this journey that they might minister to those in need. All honor to the noble women Pioneers of California!

Sister Scholastica and her companions reached San Francisco on the steamer *Sea Bird* in January, 1856. By January 6th, they had arrived at San Pedro. General Banning's celebrated stage conveyed them to Los Angeles, the scene of their future life work. Don Ignacio Del Valle, father of our Senator Del Valle, with characteristic hospitality, gave the Sisters shelter until a home had been secured for them at the corner of Alameda and Macy streets. In this home the Sisters lived for many years. The property, on which was a small frame house, was bought from Hon. B. D. Wilson. The house, familiar to all of you, had been brought in sections from New York via Cape Horn. The sections were all marked to facilitate reconstruction, but alas! there was no one in Los Angeles who could be engaged by Mr. Wilson to join together that which had been put asunder, for in those days, adobes were more popular than frame buildings. A carpenter was brought from the East and the house at last completed. As I said, it was this house which afterward became the home of the Sisters. Soon the Sisters gathered about them the orphans who have always been their special care. In connection with their Asylum, they had a school for children and young ladies and in this school it was that so many of the prominent and worthy mothers and grandmothers of Southern California received their education.

The people of Los Angeles welcomed the Sisters, and, regardless of religious differences, gave them cordial assistance. Gentle Sister Scholastica and genial Sister Ann were everybody's friends and to this day are not forgotten, even by those who have not seen them for many years. To need their help was the only ticket of admission to their sympathy; color, race, or creed did not enter at all into the consideration.

They always delighted to tell of how generous the people were when they held their Fairs in the old Perry and Woodworth building or in the old Stearns' hall in the Arcadia block, and how they received most valuable aid from Jewish and Protestant, as well as from Catholic women. There were important considerations to decide the date of a Fair. It could not be held except on "Steamer day," as there was no ice save that which came from San Francisco, and it could not be held except at the right time of moon as no one cared to grope about the streets in Egyptian darkness. In spite of all, the generous women of Los Angeles aided the Sisters in their work, and the Sisters of Charity do not forget their friends.

In 1889, on the 50th anniversary of Sister Scholastica's life as a Sister of Charity, many of her friends gave her, as a substantial tribute of their esteem and love, the gift of a purse of \$3,000, which she at once devoted to the building fund for the erection of a new and more commodious home for the rapidly increasing number of orphans. On the 9th of February, 1890, was laid the corner stone of the magnificent Orphanage now overlooking the city. When the home was completed, the Sisters moved thither, and here it was, surrounded by a family of nearly four hundred orphans, that Sister Scholastica, whose life was all gentleness and peace even in the midst of trials, folded her willing hands in her last long sleep. She had labored long and with steadfast purpose, each day found her the same, faithful in all things, ever kind, ever courageous. When her body failed through age, she, whose life had been so pure and undeviating, knew no physical ailment. She was just tired, she said, and uncomplainingly bore the gradual ebbing of her strength. Of the band whose leader she was, but two survive her, Sister Ann, now at Emmitsburg, and Sisters Angelita, at present in El Paso, Texas.

Sister Scholastica's eulogy I cannot pronounce, for that can be justly given only where she now receives her "hundred fold."